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(b) The hearing officer's analysis, findings and conclusions, in light of the hearing, concerning the employee's or the Department's grounds;

(c) The amount and validity of the alleged debt; and

(d) The repayment schedule, if applicable.

§ 17.132 Review of departmental records related to the debt.

(a) *Notification by employee.* An employee who intends to inspect or copy departmental records related to the debt must send a letter to the Secretary stating his or her intention. The letter must be received by the Secretary within 20 calendar days of the date of the Notice of Intent.

(b) *Secretary's response.* In response to timely notice submitted by the debtor as described in paragraph (a) of this section, the Secretary will notify the employee of the location and time when the employee may inspect and copy Department records related to the debt.

§ 17.133 Written agreement to repay debt as alternative to salary offset.

(a) *Notification by employee.* The employee may propose, in response to a Notice of Intent, a written agreement to repay the debt as an alternative to salary offset. Any employee who wishes to do this must submit a proposed written agreement to repay the debt which is received by the Secretary within 20 calendar days of the date of the Notice of Intent.

(b) *Secretary's response.* In response to timely notice by the debtor as described in paragraph (a) of this section, the Secretary will notify the employee whether the employee's proposed written agreement for repayment is acceptable. It is within the Secretary's discretion to accept a repayment agreement instead of proceeding by offset. In making this determination, the Secretary will balance the Department's interest in collecting the debt against hardship to the employee. If the debt is delinquent and the employee has not disputed its existence or amount, the Secretary will accept a repayment agreement instead of offset only if the employee is able to establish that offset would result in undue financial

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hardship or would be against equity and good conscience.

§ 17.134 Procedures for salary offset: when deductions may begin.

(a) Deductions to liquidate an employee's debt will be by the method and in the amount stated in the Secretary's Notice of Intent to collect from the employee's current pay.

(b) If the employee filed a petition for hearing with the Secretary before the expiration of the period provided for in § 17.129, then deductions will begin after the hearing officer has provided the employee with a hearing, and the final written decision is in favor of the Secretary.

(c) If an employee retires or resigns before collection of the amount of the indebtedness is completed, the remaining indebtedness will be collected according to the procedures for administrative offset (see §§ 17.100 through 17.118).

§ 17.135 Procedures for salary offset: types of collection.

A debt will be collected in a lump-sum or in installments. Collection will be by lump-sum collection unless the employee is financially unable to pay in one lump-sum, or if the amount of the debt exceeds 15 percent of disposable pay. In these cases, deduction will be by installments.

§ 17.136 Procedures for salary offset: methods of collection.

(a) *General.* A debt will be collected by deductions at officially-established pay intervals from an employee's current pay account, unless the employee and the Secretary agree to alternative arrangements for repayment. The alternative arrangement must be in writing, signed by both the employee and the Secretary.

(b) *Installment deductions.* Installment deductions will be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of employment. The size and frequency of installment deductions will bear a reasonable relation to the size of the debt and the employee's ability to pay. However, the amount deducted for any period will not exceed 15 percent of the disposable pay from which the deduction is made, unless the employee has

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agreed in writing to the deduction of a greater amount. If possible, the installment payment will be sufficient in size and frequency to liquidate the debt in three years. Installment payments of less than \$25 per pay period or \$50 a month will be accepted only in the most unusual circumstances.

(c) *Sources of deductions.* The Department will make deductions only from basic pay, special pay, incentive pay, retired pay, retainer pay, or in the case of an employee not entitled to basic pay, other authorized pay.

§ 17.137 Procedures for salary offset: imposition of interest.

Interest will be charged in accordance with § 17.72.

§ 17.138 Non-waiver of rights.

So long as there are no statutory or contractual provisions to the contrary, no employee involuntary payment (of all or a portion of a debt) collected under these regulations will be interpreted as a waiver of any rights that the employee may have under 5 U.S.C. 5514.

§ 17.139 Refunds.

The Department will refund promptly to the appropriate individual amounts offset under these regulations when:

(a) A debt is waived or otherwise found not owing the United States (unless expressly prohibited by statute or regulation); or

(b) The Department is directed by an administrative or judicial order to refund amounts deducted from the employee's current pay.

§ 17.140 Miscellaneous provisions: correspondence with the Department.

The employee shall file an original and two copies of a request for a hearing with the Clerk, Office of the Chief Administrative Law Judge, Room 2158, Department of HUD, Washington, DC 20410, on official work days between the hours of 8:45 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. All other correspondence shall be submitted to the Department Claims Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC 20410. Documents may be filed by personal delivery or mail. All documents shall

be printed, typewritten, or otherwise processed in clear, legible form and on letter-size paper.

IRS TAX REFUND OFFSET PROVISIONS

SOURCE: Sections 17.150 through 17.161 appear at 51 FR 39750, Oct. 31, 1986, unless otherwise noted.

§ 17.150 Scope.

(a) The standards set forth in §§ 17.150 through 17.161 are the Department's procedures for requesting the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to offset tax refunds due taxpayers who have a past-due debt obligation to the Department. These procedures are authorized by the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984 (31 U.S.C. 3720A) and apply to the collection of debts as authorized by common law, by 31 U.S.C. 3716, or under other statutory authority.

(b) The Secretary will use the IRS tax refund offset to collect claims which are certain in amount, past due and legally enforceable, and which are eligible for tax refund offset under regulations issued by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(c) The Secretary will not report debts to the IRS except for the purpose of using the offset procedures described in §§ 17.150 through 17.161. Debts of less than \$100.00, exclusive of interest and other charges, will not be reported.

(d) If not legally enforceable because of lapse of statute of limitations but otherwise valid, the debt will be reported to the IRS as a forgiven debt on Form 1099G. (Form 1099G is an information return which Government agencies file with the IRS to report forgiven debt, and the forgiven amount is considered income to the taxpayer.) (See § 17.159.)

§ 17.151 Notice requirements before offset.

A request for deduction from an IRS tax refund will be made only after the Secretary makes a determination that an amount is owed and past due and provides the debtor with 65 calendar days written notice. This Notice of Intent to Collect by IRS Tax Refund Offset (Notice of Intent) will state:

(a) The nature and amount of the debt;